City of Barrie
Report of the Sustainability Advisory Committee

Thursday, March 05, 2026 at 05:30 PM
For consideration by the Infrastructure and Community Investment Committee

Present:
Councillor, S. Morales
K. MacLeod
D. MacKeown
S. Schwarz
J. Bourne
N. Flinn
L. Hoffarth
J. Northcote
W. Steimle
D. Waters

Absent:
Councillor, B. Hamilton
E. van Wesenbeeck

Staff:
Landscape Architectural Planner, W. Loevenmark
Legislative Coordinator, C. Payne

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Councillor S. Morales at 5:33 p.m.

2. PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Presentation by Development Services regarding Parks Strategic Plan Community Engagement

W. Loevenmark, Landscape Architectural Planner, provided an overview of the Parks Strategic Plan Community Engagement process and advised that Development Services are looking for feedback regarding the future of Barrie's parks. She encouraged the Committee to provide feedback and consider the role of naturalized spaces, environmental heritage, climate change, and active transportation as they relate to parks.

The Committee provided feedback on the following:

- Community/edible gardens and food forests;
- Tree canopy and vegetation coverage;
- Equitable distribution of parks around the City;
- Groomed, open spaces versus more naturalized areas in parks and applicable City policies;
- Winter access to City parks and trails;
- Incorporating below-ground collection bins into park standards; and
- Types of turf and grass used in City parks;

Ms. Loevenmark advised that an online survey will be available until March 22, 2026 for any further comments.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

3.1 Sustainability in Building

Member, W. Steimle discussed ways to encourage and incentivize developers to build more sustainably. He advised decreased use of natural gas, greater housing density, or more sustainable construction materials are examples of sustainability in building. The Committee agreed it would be difficult to enforce standards outside of the Ontario Building Code, and discussed whether City policies could be updated to provide incentives for exceeding the sustainability requirements of the Code.

The Committee also discussed sustainability as it relates to infrastructure, and the City's existing electronic vehicle (EV) charging stations. Members raised questions of overall demand for EV chargers and whether the number of City stations meets or exceeds current needs. The Committee discussed providing recommendations on where EV chargers should be located to target high-demand areas of the City and will consider the matter further at their next meeting.

3.2 Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit On the Move Campaign

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

3.3 Pollinator Protection Strategy

Member, D. Mckeown discussed a Pollinator Protection Strategy prepared by Pollinate Barrie, and its potential implementation at the City. The Committee noted the benefits of a City-wide application of the strategy from a sustainability standpoint and suggested it be considered as part of the updated Parks Strategic Plan from Development Services.

Pollinator Protection Strategy

That a City-wide Pollinator Protection Strategy be included for future implementation within the Parks Strategic Plan.

Approved for consideration by Infrastructure and Community Investment Committee

3.4 Repair Cafe and City Swap Days

Member, J. Bourne brought forth the idea of coordinating the timing of the City's Curbside Giveaway days with the Repair Cafe events hosted by the Barrie Public Library in an effort to decrease waste and divert items that would have otherwise been disposed of. The Committee discussed the logistics of a possible coordination and agreed further input from staff and the Barrie Public Library would be required.

3.5 Barrie Conservation Trust

The Committee discussed their interest and support of the potential creation of a Barrie Conservation Trust and will continue to monitor opportunities for input and involvement as they become available.

4. REFERRED ITEMS

Nil.

5. REPORTS/MEMORANDUMS TO COMMITTEE

Nil.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

CHAIRMAN